



Report to the Legislature

Older Children who are Victims of Abuse or Neglect

Chapter 345, Section 2, Laws of 2005

August 1, 2006

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INTRODUCTION

Chapter 345, Section 2, Laws of 2005 requires the Department to review a sampling of the screening decisions related to children between the ages of eleven and eighteen on a quarterly basis through June 30, 2007.

“The department shall use the results of the quarterly reviews required by this section to improve practice and to improve the department’s training curriculum. The department is required to report to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature on the quarterly reviews required by this section on August 1, 2006 and August 1, 2007.”

I. REVIEW METHODOLOGY

The department is required to review a sample not less than two and one-half percent of all screening decisions regularly reviewed by the department that are related to children between the ages of eleven and eighteen. The sample is required to be representative of the diversity of screening decisions related to children between ages eleven and eighteen.

Sample

A random sample of referrals for children between the ages of eleven and eighteen was reviewed across all Children's Administration (CA) programs; Child Protective Services (CPS), Child Welfare Services (CWS) and Family Reconciliation Services (FRS). The sample included referrals from each of the six Division of Children services (DCFS) regions and Central Intake that closely approximated their percentage in the total pool. A stratified sampling methodology was developed so that the referrals reviewed from each of the six DCFS regions and Central Intake closely approximated their percentage of CPS, FRS and CWS referrals.

The sample was approximately two and one half percent of the total referrals received by the department for children between the ages of eleven and eighteen.

Quarter	Referrals Reviewed	Total Number of Referrals
2 nd Quarter 2005	329	13,177
3 rd Quarter 2005	347	10,841
4 th Quarter 2005	347	11,912

Review Questions and Criteria for Rating

The review questions and criteria for rating were developed by the CA Quality Assurance, Central Case Review Team with the consultation from CPS Program Managers from headquarters and field offices. Three questions were developed to address the accuracy of screening decisions for the referrals reviewed. Each referral reviewed was rated as Fully Achieved, Not Achieved or Not Applicable for each of the three following questions:

1. Was the referral accurately assigned to the appropriate program?

Fully Achieved: The referral was accurately assigned to the appropriate program.

- **CPS:** Report of child abuse or maltreatment.
- **CWS:** Requests from parents or children for placement services when the placement is not the result of child abuse, or maltreatment beyond the scope of FRS, or requests from parents or caregivers for Medicaid Personal Care Services.
- **FRS:** Requests from parents or youth for services based on family conflict, or notification by a Crisis Residential Center a youth's placement.

Not Achieved: The referral was not accurately assigned to the appropriate program of CPS, CWS, or FRS.

2. For CPS referrals, was the final intake screening decision accurate?

Fully Achieved: The final intake decision was accurately screened:

- **Information Only:** Referral does not meet sufficiency screen criteria and the referral is screened out; *or*
- **Low Risk/ Alternate Intervention:** May include a referral to an alternative response system; *or*
- **Accepted for Investigation:** Referral meets sufficiency screen criteria and referral is screened in; *or*
- **Third Party:** Referral does not meet sufficiency screen criteria and referral is screened out. (Third party abuse is abuse committed by persons other than those responsible for the child's welfare).

Not Achieved: The final intake decision was not accurately screened.

NA: The referral was a CWS Intake referral or a FRS referral.

3. For CPS referrals that were accepted for investigation, was the response time accurate?

Fully Achieved: The referral was accepted for investigation and the designated response of emergent or non-emergent was accurate.

- **Emergent Response:** Required for children who are at risk of imminent harm (significant possibility or likelihood that the child may be seriously physically or emotionally injured in the near future), and the child must be seen by a social worker within twenty-four hours.

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- **Non-Emergent Response:** Required for children who are not at risk of imminent harm and the child must be seen by a social worker within seventy-two hours (which became effective in policy on August 1, 2005).

Not Achieved: The referral was accepted for investigation and designated response time was not accurate.

NA: The referral was:

- CPS Information only, low risk/alternative response, or third party
- CWS Intake
- FRS

Review Team

The review teams consisted of members of the CA Quality Assurance, Central Case Review Team and CPS Program Managers from headquarters and field offices. Prior to each review, training occurred on the questions and criteria for rating as well as the procedures for achieving consensus on ratings.

Procedures for Achieving Consensus on Ratings

When it was determined by a review team member that a screening decision may not be accurate for one of the questions listed above, the referral was reviewed and discussed with other review team members to achieve consensus regarding the final rating.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVIEW

The first review was conducted in July 2005 on referrals received in the second quarter 2005. The second review was conducted in November 2005 on referrals received in the third quarter of 2005. A third review was conducted in March 2006 on referrals received in the fourth quarter 2005.

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III. REVIEW RESULTS

Was the Referral Accurately Assigned to the Appropriate Program?

(CPS, CWS or FRS)

Program	Second Quarter 2005 Assigned Accurately	Third Quarter 2005 Assigned Accurately	Fourth Quarter 2005 Assigned Accurately
Child Protective Services (CPS)	98% <i>256 out of 259</i>	100% <i>263 out of 263</i>	100% <i>260 out of 260</i>
Child Welfare Services (CWS)	77% <i>7 out of 9</i>	75% <i>6 out of 8</i>	82% <i>9 out of 11</i>
Family Reconciliation Services (FRS)	95% <i>58 out of 61</i>	95% <i>72 out of 76</i>	99% <i>75 out of 76</i>
Statewide Totals	98% <i>321 out of 329</i>	98% <i>341 out of 347</i>	99% <i>344 out of 347</i>

For CPS referrals, was the final intake screening decision accurate?

(Information Only, Low Risk/ Alternate Intervention, Accepted for Investigation, or Third Party)

Second Quarter 2005 Accurate Screening Decision	Third Quarter 2005 Accurate Screening Decision	Fourth Quarter Accurate Screening Decision
91% <i>235 out of 259</i>	95% <i>250 out of 263</i>	99% <i>257 out of 260</i>

For CPS referrals that were accepted for investigation, was the response time accurate?

(Emergent or Non Emergent)

Second Quarter 2005 Accurate Response Time	Third Quarter 2005 Accurate Response Time	Fourth Quarter 2005 Accurate Response Time
100% <i>114 out of 114</i>	95% <i>97 out of 102</i>	100% <i>86 out of 86</i>

IV. UTILIZATION OF THE RESULTS

Practice Improvement

Quarterly review reports are written that include the results of the review and information about types of referrals that have inaccurate screening decision. The quarterly reports are presented to the Child Protection Program Managers from each region that meet monthly with the Central Intake manager and Headquarters staff to discuss program, policy and practice issues. The results of the quarterly intake screening reviews and the types of referrals with inaccurate screening decisions are discussed with this group for quality improvement purposes. The quarterly intake screening review reports are also presented to Children's Administration management and the Regional Administrators in each of the six Children's Administration regions. The review results are then shared with supervisors and staff in various regional and local office meetings.

Policy Development

The quarterly intake screening reviews are reviewed by Headquarters Policy and Program staff to identify trends and themes with a view to determining if policy changes are required to address issues identified in the reviews.

Curriculum Development

The information gathered from the quarterly reviews has been incorporated in a comprehensive curriculum to train social workers. The curriculum includes a specific focus on intake screening for referrals on adolescents. The curriculum uses data and case examples from the reviews to help intake workers to improve best practice when screening adolescent referrals.

The quarterly intake screening review results are distributed to the CA Office Chief of Training and Development for utilization in any further curriculum development.